

Application No. 09/324,741

a digitizer for sampling the analog signal to provide digitized samples indicative of the repeatable magnetic characteristic;

a waveform circuit for providing range data characteristic of the analog signal; and

a storage for storing representations of the digitized samples and the range data as identification data to identify the document.

2. An identification system according to claim 1 wherein the magnetic stripe is recorded with a series of leading zeros and the digitizer samples the analog signal in a portion representing the series of leading zeros.

3. An identification system according to claim 1 wherein the magnetic stripe is recorded with digital data represented by magnetic transitions and the digitizer samples a portion of the analog signal representing spaces between said magnetic transition to provide a digitized samples indicative of the repeatable magnetic characteristic.

4. An identification system according to claim 1 wherein the documents comprise magnetic stripe cards and wherein the digital data recorded on the magnetic stripes includes data for fetching identification data from the storage.

5. An identification system for identifying documents bearing a magnetic stripe recorded with digital data and having a repeatable magnetic characteristic, comprising:

a magnetic stripe sensor for sensing the magnetic stripe to provide an analog signal representative of the recorded digital data and the repeatable magnetic characteristic;

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a magnetic characteristic circuit providing magnetic characteristic representations indicative of the repeatable magnetic characteristic;

a waveform circuit providing range representations indicative of a characteristic of the analog signal; and

a forming circuit to provide document identification representations based on the magnetic characteristic representations and the range representations to identify the documents.

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6. (Amended) An identification system according to claim 5 further including storage to store document identification representations and a comparison structure for comparing document identification representations from the storage with document identification representations from the forming circuit to verify a document.

7. An identification system according to claim 6 wherein the storage stores a plurality of document identification representations for comparison with a document identification representation from the forming circuit and wherein verification requires a degree of dissimilarity.

8. An identification system according to claim 5 wherein the magnetic characteristic circuit provides magnetic characteristic representations from the analog signal at substantially flat sections to produce a predetermined number of digital samples.

9. An identification system according to claim 5 wherein the waveform circuits provides range representations indicative of amplitudes of the analog signal.

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10. An identification system according to claim 5 wherein the waveform circuit provides range representations indicative of ratios of amplitudes of the analog signal at predetermined locations.

11. A system for use with a card bearing a magnetic stripe having a repeatable magnetic characteristic and recorded with digital data in the form of magnetic transitions, said system for providing a sensed characteristic identification for the card, comprising:

means for sensing said magnetic stripe to provide representations of digitally recorded data and representations of the repeatable magnetic characteristic in the form of digital sample signals;

means for selectively storing card identification words formed from the digital sample signals to manifest the repeatable magnetic characteristic of a card and amplitude characteristics of the digital sample signals.

12. A process for identifying documents bearing a magnetic stripe having a distinct magnetic characteristic that is capable of repeated sensing to identify individual documents, said process including the steps of:

sensing the magnetic stripe to produce a representative analog signal manifesting the distinct magnetic characteristic;

providing magnetic characteristic representations indicative of the distinct magnetic characteristic;

providing range characteristic representations indicative of the analog signal regarding amplitude; and

providing identification representations based on the magnetic characteristic representations and the range characteristic representations to identify the documents.

13. A document, or the like, having its fingerprint recorded for the later verification of its identity,

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the document having a magnetic medium portion,
the fingerprint comprising a remanent noise of the magnetic
medium portion, and
a characteristic of an analog waveform sensed from the magnetic
medium portion.

14. A document, or the like, according to claim 13 wherein the
characteristic of an analog waveform is a ratio of waveform amplitudes
at specific locations.

15. A document, or the like, according to claim 14 wherein the
characteristic of an analog waveform is a ratio of peak amplitudes at
spaced apart locations in the waveform.

16. A document, or the like, according to claim 13 comprising
a plastic card bearing a magnetic recording stripe.

17. A document, or the like, according to claim 13 wherein the
remanent noise and the characteristic of an analog waveform are
recorded as the fingerprint for correlation with a subsequently sensed
and formed fingerprint.

18. A document, or the like, according to claim 13 wherein the
document has recorded in the magnetic medium portion, data for
locating a reference fingerprint for correlation with a fingerprint
sensed from the document.

19. (New) The identification system of claim 1, wherein the
range data includes information concerning ratios of pulse amplitude
to center line offset.

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20. (New) The identification system of claim 5, wherein the characteristic of the analog signal includes information concerning ratios of pulse amplitude to center line offset.

21. (New) The system of claim 11, wherein the amplitude characteristics of the digital sample signals include information concerning ratios of pulse amplitude to center line offset.

22. (New) The process of claim 12, wherein the range characteristic representations indicative of the analog signal regarding amplitude include information concerning ratios of pulse amplitude to center line offset.

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23. (New) An identification system for identifying documents bearing a magnetic stripe recorded with digital data and having a repeatable magnetic characteristic, comprising:

a magnetic stripe sensor for sensing the magnetic stripe to provide an analog signal representative of the recorded digital data and the repeatable magnetic characteristic;

a magnetic characteristic circuit providing magnetic characteristic representations indicative of the repeatable magnetic characteristic;

a forming circuit to provide document identification representations based on the magnetic characteristic representations and the range representations to identify the documents;

storage to store document identification representations and a comparison structure for comparing document identification representations from the storage with document identification representations from the forming circuit to verify a document; and

wherein the storage stores a plurality of document identification representations for comparison with a document identification